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Ukhamba: The Implications of Amateur Domestic Genealogical Research for African Socio-historical Analysis

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Ukhamba: The Implications of Amateur Domestic Genealogical Research for African Socio-historical Analysis''

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Tanya Evans: “Secrets and Lies: The Radical Potential of Family History”

Social and Cultural Historian

- ▶ Academic
- ▶ “Official Record”-Government Documents, Archives
- ▶ Researcher
- ▶ Patriarchal and Male

Family historian

- ▶ Hobbyist
- ▶ “Unofficial” Record- Personal Diaries, Journals, Oral Narratives, Personal Effects and Autographs
- ▶ Detective
- ▶ Egalitarian and Female

Effect of “New Media” Technologies

Democratization of Data

More people collecting data

More varieties of data

More people having access to data

Democratization of Methodology

More people with formal education.

More people with the capability of using technology

More people having access to technology

More people having access to assistance with regards to research in areas where they are deficient.

Democratization of Utility

More people find data useful.

More people respond to data or find they need to develop the capability to respond to data or at least to data-driven implications and policies.

Net Result: Breakdown in the “Wall”
between the social/cultural and
the familial.

(1) Shared Material

(2) Shared Cultural and Social
Institutions of Activity



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Inmates use Family History centers to find family trees

By [Ben Winslow](#), Deseret News

Published: Monday, March 23 2009 1:22 a.m. MDT

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Summary

In a cramped room in a Utah State Prison medium-security unit, inmates sit hunched over computers, trying to decipher the aged writings of people long dead.

UTAH STATE PRISON — In a cramped room here in the Wasatch medium-security unit, inmates sit hunched over

computers, trying to decipher the aged writings of people long dead.

Some scroll through reels of microfilm, searching for a name that can help unlock the secrets of the past.

They are among hundreds of inmates doing genealogical work in

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Two Views of “Family Histories”

Conservative and conservative

- ▶ Nostalgic for an ideal type of “family”
- ▶ Desire for social status
- ▶ Stabilizing element in times of social instability, disruption, and transformation

Radical

- ▶ Deconstruction of social status
- ▶ Deconstruction of the idea of stability in class relationships and power relations
- ▶ Undermines narratives about historical change and continuity

The Identity Paper Tchaiko Kwanyana

Goals

Increase literacy-
technological/linguistic/cultural

Increase self-respect, individual
and communal

Empowerment

Elements

Part I family

-autobiography -uniqueness

Family celebrations -foods

Heroines/heroes –proverbs

Folk personalities

Part II Group

Folk tales myths and legends

Proverbs themes nonfiction

Historical fiction film essays

Elements 2

Part III Shift as a result of forced
migration or immigration

Part IV reflection

conclusions and projections

Strengths and weaknesses

Part V appendix

Family trees maps photographs

The Identity Paper Tchaiko Kwanyana

Specs

3 hours of public radio a week

3 days a month 2 hours in
computer lab with parents or other
extended family members
throughout

Students in English...respondents in
any tongue

UKHAMBBA (CLAYPOT)

Goals

- Bridge “digital divide”
- Bridge “linguistic divide”
- Restoring a sense of community
- Preservation of Afrikan familial source materials

Methodology

- Solicitation of families that agree to participate in the project
- Provision of software and materials for the community to engage the task
- Provision of opportunities for sharing of information on a larger scale and for preservation of the materials as well

